

2010 SESSIONAL AWARD RECIPIENT, JCU FLBCA

JCU Sessional Teachers participate in a range of teaching roles and thus are oftentimes at the very forefront of student engagement, hence their ability to influence student learning in powerful ways. Sessionals contribute meaningfully to the learning and teaching community and their genuine interest in facilitating student learning promotes high quality student learning experiences as is evident in SFS.

The casual teaching experience encompasses but is not limited to preparing for and presenting tutorials and/or workshops; lectures; mentoring and group facilitation; designing teaching materials; external/online teaching and marking. In 2010, JCU peers and colleagues nominated Miss Diana Castorina for the JCU FLBCA Sessional Award that recognizes outstanding contributions to Student Learning.

TLD's Best Practice Project brings you:

AWARD WINNING ATTRIBUTES OF SESSIONAL **DIANA CASTORINA**

IN THIS ACCOUNT, THE FIRST TIME SESSIONAL AWARD RECIPIENT REFLECTS ON THE CASUAL TEACHING EXPERIENCE AND WHAT IT MEANS TO BE FORMALLY ACKNOWLEDGED FOR HER POSITIVE CONTRIBUTIONS TO STUDENT LEARNING.



I was totally shocked when I heard that I had won the Sessional Award as I didn't even know such an award existed! Teaching itself is such a rewarding job and to be recognized for the work I do by my colleagues is very encouraging.

I am motivated to help students learn because I genuinely want them to understand the material. It is very gratifying for me to see students engaged and content because they 'get' the information.

I value having close relationships with my peers. I feel it is important to talk about subject content and similarities or differences in the way we teach. It is always interesting to share in or contribute a different perspective.

[RESEARCH INTERESTS](#)

'Passionate, patient and professional are three words I would use to describe my teaching style'.

Diana Castorina, Discipline of Economics

In 2006 I completed a Bachelor of Economics with Honors and worked as a research consultant for a local firm for several years before returning to JCU to undertake a Ph.D. in Economics. I 'fell' into teaching when my I started my Ph.D. studies in August 2009. I was approached to Tutor in first year economics and I haven't looked back. In 2011 my teaching range includes Statistics.

In my view, it is important that one teaches with passion because students respond well to teaching that is motivated by a keen interest to impart subject-specific content. I believe in being patient with students while they process new information and test their understanding, and if students are unable to grasp the information straight away, I will try to improve my explanation.

For me, the upside of casual teaching is the enormous amount of support and encouragement I have received from all staff in the School of Business. The downside is perhaps the grey area about ones rights as a casual teacher within the wider teaching community, and the extent to which one is able to participate in daily teaching and learning activities.

I would love to learn about innovative methods that other educational hubs, both globally and domestically use to engage their students. Hearing from guest speakers would be great! Since you ask in what way I might be supported more to sustain or improve my teaching: I think that holding regular courses as a way to encourage professional development would be helpful.